# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

## Survey of Methods and Programs to Increase School Attendance, Decrease Absenteeism, and Deal with Drop-out

JACQUELINE DESNOYERS
JEROME D. PARKER

This research project was funded under contract by the Ministry of Education, Ontario. It reflects the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Ministry.

Ontario

# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND NON-ATTENDANCE IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

## Survey of Methods and Programs to Increase School Attendance, Decrease Absenteeism, and Deal with Drop-out

JACQUELINE DESNOYERS
JEROME D. PAUKER

This research project was funded under contract by the Ministry of Education, Ontario.

It reflects the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Ministry.

Chris Ward, Minister
Bernard J. Shapiro, Deputy Minister

90-00861/

© QUEEN'S PRINTER FOR ONTARIO, 1988

**Order information:**

**Publications Sales**
**The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education**
**252 Bloor Street West**
**Toronto, Ontario**
**M5S 1V6**
**(416) 926-4707**

Will invoice on orders over $30.00. Other orders must be accompanied by a cheque or money order payable to O.I.S.E.

**MGS Publications Services**
**880 Bay Street, 5th Floor**
**Toronto, Ontario**
**M7A 1N8**
**(416) 965-6015**
**(Toll Free) 1-800-268-7540**
**(Toll Free from area code 807)**
**Ask operator for Zenith 67200.**

Order must be accompanied by a cheque or money order payable to the Treasurer of Ontario.

---

*Contract 0640*
*ON03640*

**Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data**

Desnoyers, Jacqueline, 1944-
School attendance and non-attendance in Canada and the United States

ISBN 0-7729-3547-5

1. School attendance — Canada. 2. School attendance — United States. I. Pauker, Jerome D., 1925- . II. Ontario. Ministry of Education. III. Title.

LC142.D47 1988 371.2'4 C88-099613-7

---

This project comprises five volumes. The following three are available on microfiche at MGS Publications Services.

"School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Review of the 1975-1986 Literature", ON04700
"School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Compulsory School Attendance Legislation", ON04701
"School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Classification of Male Young Offenders with School Attendance Problems", ON04702

Bound copies of the remaining two reports are available for sale from the Ontario Government Bookstore and the OISE Bookstore.

*School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: An Overview of the Project* (Research Brief)
*School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Methods and Programs to Increase School Attendance, Decrease Absenteeism, and Deal with Drop-out*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Preface | v |
| I. Introduction | 1 |
| II. How the Survey Was Conducted | 2 |
| III. Organization of the Information | 4 |
| IV. Attendance Tracking Process | 6 |
| Recording and Reporting Attendance | 6 |
| Monitoring Attendance | 8 |
| V. Attendance Follow-up | 10 |
| Follow-up of School or School System Attendance Problems | 10 |
| Staff training and development | 11 |
| Incentives | 11 |
| Parent-school involvement | 12 |
| Special programs | 13 |
| Tutorial-remedial | 13 |
| Guidance and counselling | 14 |
| Work programs-vocational training | 16 |
| Alternative curricula/programs | 17 |
| Other specialized programs | 20 |
| Specialized personnel | 21 |
| Public relations methods | 22 |
| School-community co-ordination | 23 |
| Follow-up of Individual Attendance Problems | 25 |
| VI. Current Research in Program Evaluation | 30 |
| VII. Discussion | 32 |
| VIII. Recommendations | 43 |
| Appendices | 48 |
| A. Model Programs | 49 |
| B. Example of an Attendance Plan | 54 |
| C. Job Descriptions of Specialized Personnel | 59 |
| D. Alternative Programs | 63 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS cont'd


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| E. | Staff Development Programs ..... | 67 |
| F. | School-Community Programs ..... | 69 |
| G. | School-Community Social Service Agencies Co-ordination ..... | 72 |
| H. | Flow Charts for Absence Procedures ..... | 77 |
| I. | Persons Met with, Phoned, or Otherwise Contacted in the Course of the Survey ..... | 79 |

## PREFACE

This report is one of five which, together, make up the study "School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Legislation, Classification, Research, and Intervention".

The five reports[1] are:

> School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Review of the 1975-1986 Literature.
>
> School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Compulsory School Attendance Legislation.
>
> School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Methods and Programs to Increase School Attendance, Decrease Absenteeism, and Deal with Drop-out.
>
> School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Classification of Male Young Offenders with School Attendance Problems.
>
> School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: An Overview of the Project.

The study was conducted under a contract between the principal investigator (J.D.P.) and the Ontario Ministry of Education, which provided the funds.

We wish here to express our gratitude for the spirit of co-operation, helpfulness, and hospitality with which our requests for information were received. We found people in schools, governments, universities, and elsewhere, very willing to share information, and eager for an exchange of views. We have listed, in Appendix I most of those with whom we have made contact. We say "most of" because it is very possible that a

name or a place may have become dislodged and gone unnoticed in the transfer of information from sites to airports to train and bus terminals, to offices, to our homes, and from room to room; if that has happened, we apologize for the oversight.

We wish, also, to apologize to our respective spouses for the disruption in social life and in living space which were a result of the travel, the weeks of organizing materials, and the layouts of papers and pamphlets over dining room tables and living room floors; we wish to thank them, too for their (sometime) tolerance of our efforts and intrusions.

Finally, we wish to express our appreciation for the contribution of Seppo Nousiainen, who read preliminary versions of this manuscript and offered many valuable suggestions for keeping the contents focused and clear.

---

[1]The complete reports of each of the four studies are available on microfiche from the Ontario Government Bookstore. A printed copy of the fifth report, a Research Brief giving an overview of the study may be purchased from the Ontario Government Bookstore and the OISE Bookstore

# I. INTRODUCTION

The literature on school attendance, non-attendance, and drop-out includes some descriptions of methods and programs for promoting attendance, preventing non-attendance, and dealing with attendance problems when they arise (see Volume I of the study project, "School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Review of the 1975-1986 Literature"). The approaches range from methods designed to help an individual child with a specific attendance problem, to programs aimed at the student bodies of entire school systems. The former approaches usually are well documented as to results, but raise questions regarding questions of generalizability and applicability for school boards grappling with system-wide problesm; the latter approaches are most likely to remain unevaluated in any helpful way.

For Ontario, which is adjusting to the changes in federal criminal law that have dropped truancy as an offence, which is rewriting its compulsory attendance statutes, and which is trying to find more effective ways of keeping young people in the education system, there may be much to be gained by a look at how other places in North Americe have attempted to deal with what many see as an increasingly serious attendance problem.

The survey reported here was conducted to supply this information to those in the Ontario Ministry of Education who have the responsibility for province-wide policy, planning, leadership, and training. We hope that this report will be helpful, too, to those persons who supplied us with information, and to others who may read this report.

## II. HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

Potential sources of information were identified in several ways. In a letter which was sent to the Ministries or Departments of Education in the 63 major legislative jurisdictions in Canada and the United States (see Volume II of this project, "School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Compulsory School Attendance Legislation"), we asked also for the names of persons whom we might contact regarding school attendance intervention and research programs. The literature suggested other sources. A number of contacts were established at professional meetings, and personal contacts opened up additional avenues. In the end, we met with, spoke with by phone, or exchanged correspondence with, the persons who are listed in Appendix A of this report.

Although the list is long, it is far from exhaustive, and it was by no means systematically engendered. Indeed, we came upon some of the people and programs serendipitously; there are other persons and programs we would have liked to contact, but did not have the time for, and we are certain that there are other exemplary programs of which we are unaware. Nevertheless, we do believe that we have sampled from a wide enough geographical area, and from enough programs and knowledgeable persons, that our survey represents a fair overview of the range of current interventions and current thinking in North America.

As we spoke with or otherwise corresponded with our information sources, we had no formal interview plan or set of

questions. Our aim was to find out (1) what programs and methods are in operation, and why, (2) what is being planned, and why, and (3) what kinds of evaluation have been done, are in progress, or are in planning. Some of our contacts were very brief, while the longest lasted for nine hours. We made on-site visits to 29 cities in 6 provinces, 13 states, and the District of Columbia. There also was some correspondence with Europeans, and we were able to speak for a short while (via interpreter, in part) with a school psychologist and a special educator from the U.S.S.R.

## III. ORGANIZATION OF THE INFORMATION

We were presented with the challenge of how to present in coherent form the mass of information given to us in our meetings and provided to us in various printed materials. After several attempts at different arrangements, we settled on a framework which is organized around several processes or areas, as follows:

A. attendance tracking process and components.

B. follow-up process and components.

   1. school system.

   2. individual.

C. program evaluation.

Inherent in the overall process are the many foci or intents of the programs and approaches we present:

- promotion of attendance.
- prevention of non-attendance.
- intervention in non-attendance.
- prevention of drop-out.
- provision of educational assistance and support to students who are dropping out.
- provision of educational opportunities for those who already have dropped out.

We do not attempt to present here all of the information we have gathered. (This information will be made available to the Ministry of Education.) Rather, with the elaboration of the

framework and the presentation of examples, we provide what we believe to be a true representation of the current state of school attendance affairs in North America.

Three sections of this report (Attendance Tracking Process; Attendance Follow-up; Current Research in Program Evaluation) focus, respectively, on one of the three major aspects of the organizing framework listed above. These are followed by a section discussing selected aspects of the survey results, and a section which presents our recommendations.

Finally, in a set of appendices, we present descriptions of what we consider to be examples of model programs or program components.

## IV. ATTENDANCE TRACKING PROCESS

All educational systems maintain some means of tracking student enrolment and attendance. While there are several reasons for gathering this information, one of the most important is that it is a major factor in determining the funding that each school board or school district receives from the provincial or state authorities. In some locations, total enrolment at the end of a time period is used to calculate the amount of funds to be provided, while in other areas it is based on average daily membership at the end of a specified time period.

Attendance records also form the basis on which each local school system can track actual school attendance and determine the presence and degree of attendance problems.

There are three components to attendance tracking: (1) recording, (2) reporting, and (3) monitoring. There are ongoing attempts to improve the methods involved in each of the three components.

### Recording and Reporting Attendance

To maintain and improve student attendance, many local school boards or districts have attempted to develop accurate record-keeping systems at the local school level and to provide a means of reporting the information to both parents and school board personnel.

Accurate record-keeping systems at each school combine daily attendance recording, accurate records of individual

students' attendance, and records of entries into and withdrawals from school.

The most common method of recording attendance is daily record keeping by classroom teachers. In elementary schools classroom attendance recording is done both in the morning and in the afternoon. In secondary schools, the homeroom teacher or the teacher in the first class has the responsibility of taking attendance, and in many secondary schools there are a number of attendance checks during the course of the day.

In an effort to improve attendance recording and reporting, many schools have developed a process of central co-ordination. Once the daily attendance data are collected, they are forwarded to the main office for further analysis. From the attendance information, absences are noted and parents and guardians who have not contacted the school regarding the students' absences are notified that their children are not in attendance. In some places school personnel notify parents and guardians, while in other places automatic telephone dialing systems are used.

Many school offices keep attendance records for each student and provide a cumulative profile for monitoring purposes. In addition, statistics on student enrolment, including entries and withdrawals, and information on student absenteeism within the school as a whole, are maintained. Both school personnel and central administrative staff are then apprised of any new absenteeism or drop-out trends.

Where data collection is handled manually, there are prescribed forms which are completed to provide attendance informa-

tion. These forms generally include (1) a form letter to inform parents and guardians of student absences, (2) a form which provides attendance statistics, and (3) referral forms to initiate action on individual student absentee problems.

## Monitoring Attendance

Effective record keeping provides the information for monitoring the attendance of individual students. Most school boards and districts monitor (1) the type of absence (excused, or unexcused), and (2) the number of times that the absence occurred. Some educational agencies at the provincial and state level have incorporated these two monitoring guidelines directly into their attendance policies, and local jurisdictions have followed their examples. Excused and unexcused absences are defined, and the number of unexcused absences which are allowed before there is some type of involvement by school personnel is specified. In some attendance policies, the terms truancy, truant, habitual truant, and chronic truant, also are defined.

With the decrease in student population, many local school systems have realized the importance of identifying those students who have the potential to drop out of school. Computer programs have been developed to assist in this task. Several predictor variables may be included in such a program; these may include school progress, number of absences, standardized and local competency test scores, age, number of suspensions, and any of the other actual or assumed characteristics of future drop-outs. Lists of potential drop-outs are forwarded to local

schools for closer monitoring or initiation of intervention. Computers have enabled some school boards or school districts to analyse attendance in various time frames: by the day, month, school term, year.

Although most of the monitoring of student attendance is done by the local school authorities, there is a trend for more senior levels of government to be more involved. In several jurisdictions there are plans to develop means of monitoring student movement in the system. These plans include the use of individual student identification numbers for all students in a province or state, and codes which identify the current attendance status of the student (e.g., attending, suspended, dropped out, re-enrolled).

## V. ATTENDANCE FOLLOW-UP*

When school absence becomes a problem, whether a problem of an individual student, a school, or a school system, there usually is a follow-up of the situation. The follow-up process involves an assessment to determine factors contributing to the absenteeism and to initiate some type of intervention to resolve the situation.

In this survey, two levels of follow-up will be discussed, one at the school or school system level, and one for the individual attendance problem. (We recognize that this is a convenience for our presentation, and that many programs cut across levels and do not permit such a neat distinction.)

### Follow-up of School or School System Attendance Problems

In the course of our survey we came across a variety of kinds of intervention, and approaches to intervention, that are used by schools and school systems. These may include staff

---

* The term follow-up is used here, as it is understood in education, to refer to what is done after an issue or problem has been identified. For purposes of this study, follow-up incorporates both assessment and intervention processes and procedures. For example, in the case of a child who is identified as being a poor attender, follow-up might include a home visit which locates a source of difficulty in an ill, single parent who needs to have the student at home to take care of an infant child (assessment), and the referral of the family to a community welfare agency (intervention).

training and development, use of incentives for attendance, parent-school involvement, special programs, specialized personnel, public relations methods, and school-community co-ordination.

**Staff training and development**

Workshops and in-service training programs are provided to both teaching and non-teaching staff. Some of the subjects covered include accurate record keeping, classroom management strategies, working with parents, leadership training, and dealing with high-risk students. Because many high-risk students are multi-agency clients, community social service agencies often are invited to the schools to make presentations about their services.

**Incentives**

Many schools and educational authorities make special recognition of, and otherwise reward, school attendance. Schools often maintain honour rolls for perfect attendance, and recognition is given to students through plaques, trophies, buttons, etc. Students may be provided with passes to school or community events, and, bonus marks may be given for attendance. In some places, awards are given to classes or to schools for outstanding attendance or for improved attendance.

## Parent-school involvement

It is generally agreed that successful school programs depend on parental co-operation and support. Promoting regular school attendance is a responsibility of the parents, both by consensus and by law (see Volume II, "School Attendance and Non-attendance in Canada and the United States: Survey of Compulsory School Attendance Legislation"). Many schools try to encourage this support by eliciting parents' involvement in ongoing school activities, thereby opening additional channels of communication between the home and the school.

Many schools have developed a school attendance policy, with accompanying procedures, and this information is shared with both parents and students. This demonstrates the school's willingness to communicate with parents, and promotes the two-way communication which is considered so important. All of this also enables parents to become cognizant of school attendance laws, the definitions of excused and unexcused absences, the importance of parent contact with the school regarding student absence, and the procedures which are followed to handle the problems of absenteeism.

In some school boards and districts, parents have served on school attendance committees at both the local school level and the board level. Parents have helped to establish attendance policies and strategies to improve school attendance. Many parent volunteers have become an integral part of programs to increase communication between the school and the home; these parents often are the ones who will contact other parents when

students' absences need to be verified, and they serve as a support to parents whose children are having attendance problems.

Home and school associations, or parent-teacher associations, actively encourage parental participation. Many of the meetings are in seminar or workshop format and provide parents with information on child development, child management strategies, the importance of school attendance, and educational programs.

**Special programs**

At the school system level there seems to be more effort than at lower levels to develop specialized programs and approaches to maintain school attendance, reduce school absenteeism, and provide educational services for drop-outs. These programs and approaches can be separated into five categories: (1) tutorial-remedial programs, (2) guidance and counselling programs, (3) work programs-vocational training, (4) alternative curriculum/programs, and (5) other specialized programs.

**(1) Tutorial-remedial programs.** Lack of academic achievement has been defined as a potential contributing factor to school absenteeism. Many school boards and districts have implemented tutorial and remedial programs to increase the students' basic skills. These programs are held at different grade levels and take place at various times during the school year.

Many students start school with less than age-level knowledge and skills and limited language development. To deal with

these deficiencies, some schools offer pre-school instruction programs (the most notable one being Head Start in the United States). Three areas of cognitive functioning often are prominently targeted: formal language, problem solving, and sensory discrimination. In some programs, parents (most often mothers) are trained to work with their children at home.

Remedial and tutorial approaches are a necessary component in the alternative educational programs which have been designed to serve the needs of students who are not able or not willing to function in the regular school system, or who, for other reasons, may do better outside the regular school classes. Many of these students have large gaps in their basic skills development, and remediation is a necessary part of the education effort.

**(2) Guidance and counselling.** Guidance and counselling services are perceived as having important roles to play in reducing absenteeism at both the elementary and secondary school levels. Delivery of these services occurs in both individual and group formats. Service areas pertinent to attendance and absenteeism include advice and counselling on courses of study, career and vocational planning, improvement of study skills, acquisition of socially acceptable behaviours, management of anxiety, and increasing self-confidence. Some schools require that efforts to intervene be documented and kept as part of the student's guidance records.

It has been recognized that there are critical periods in students' school careers when they need more attention from

guidance and counselling services. One such period occurs at the time of transition from elementary school to secondary school (or at the times of change from elementary school to junior or middle school, and from there to high school). The literature documents the increase in school absence that follows these transitions (see the bibliography which is Volume I of this project). Several school systems have introduced specialized approaches to ease the change from the lower school levels to the upper ones. These approaches include: student and parent orientation to the secondary school, a regular guidance credit program, and monitoring the attendance of students in Grade 9 (secondary school) who demonstrated attendance problems in Grade 8 (elementary school).

The teacher advisement program is another guidance and counselling method in secondary schools. A certain number of students are assigned to each teacher (average caseload is twenty to thirty students) at the beginning of the school year. Each teacher is responsible for providing educational and career counselling to the students on a regularly scheduled basis.

Counselling efforts also are being directed toward students who leave school before graduating. Peer counselling is used in some locations. Students identified as high risk are paired with students who are doing well in school. The successful student acts as a support and model for the student who is in danger of dropping out.

Counselling procedures have been established to assist students who have dropped out of school to re-enter the school

system. These approaches include counselling to assist students to enrol in the most appropriate educational program, and ongoing counselling as a support during the continuing educational process. In some school systems this is the responsibility of the guidance and counselling staff assigned to the school, while in locations where there is a high level of returning drop-outs there is a specific staff member assigned to this role (see Appendix C).

In the majority of alternative education programs there is a large guidance and counselling component which may include career counselling, study skills, problem solving, and social skills development.

**(3) Work programs-vocational training.** Some educational systems have attempted to use work programs as a means of maintaining potential drop-outs in the education system, or as a means of educating and retraining students who have left the system. Often these programs are a component of an attendance intervention program rather than the program itself. Funding for these programs is usually a joint venture incorporating local, provincial or state, federal, and private resources.

Components of work programs may include (a) part-time jobs for students until they finish school, (b) work experience, (c) career training, (d) acquiring employability skills, and (e) job search assistance.

Vocational training programs usually are offered on a half-day basis in conjunction with an academic program at the local school. The training itself can be at the local school, in

a vocational centre or trade school or community college, or in local businesses and industries.

**(4) Alternative curricula/programs.** These include a wide range of alternatives to the standard curricula and to the regular kinds of classes and schools. They provide educational options for those students for whom regular schooling is aversive or inappropriate, and they are used to retain potential drop-outs in the educational stream and for attracting drop-outs back to further education. The majority of these programs are at the secondary level, but there are some at the Grade 7 and 8 levels and a few in the lower grades.

We have divided the programs surveyed into two types: (a) programs which are designed to help students to stay in school - the in-school suspension programs, the time-out programs, and the transition programs; (b) programs which provide former students with a remedial program, usually in conjunction with a job training program.

Although some of the programs are funded by the local school board or district, many programs are funded by more senior levels of government. In programs which involve a job training component, funding generally comes from more than one level of government.

**(a) Stay-in-school programs.** These programs often are located within the regular school (sometimes called a "school within a school"). They are designed to help students who are having behaviour or attendance problems and who are not succeeding academically. The goal of these

programs is to facilitate their return to the regular school system or to find an appropriate educational placement.

Academically, there is a focus on basic skills and remediation, and instruction is in the areas of the language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Students can be granted credits when curriculum guidelines are followed. In addition, there often are programs in physical education, vocational education, and work experience. Programs located in regular schools often have access to the vocational and physical facilities of those schools.

In many programs, both individual and group counselling are provided to encourage self awareness and to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills. The focus in these programs is on the individual, which requires a smaller pupil-teacher ratio. In some larger settings, there is an administrator, clerical staff, and counselling staff.

Referrals to these programs come from school principals, guidance counsellors, parents, social service agencies, pupil personnel departments, and from the students, themselves (self referrals). Students and parents may be required, as a condition of enrolment in the program, to sign a contract which outlines the objectives of program placement and delineates the responsibilities of the parties involved.

**(b) School exit programs.** The major objective of these programs is to give students the skills to enter the job market. There is an integration of vocational and academic skills to facilitate this process. In many programs, the academic focus is on basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills. Some programs offer credits in these areas. To prepare students for the world of work, life skills are emphasized. Group and individual counselling also are offered to assist students with effective communication and interpersonal skills, and to develop career awareness.

Vocational training and work experience are a major component of these programs. Students often spend up to half a day at a job or in some type of skills development program. To accomodate this training, class hours and scheduling must be arranged to allow attendance during non-standard hours. In addition, many of these students are economically deprived, requiring that they work, thus adding another reason for flexibility in scheduling. Referrals to these programs come from the same sources as those listed for the stay-in-school programs. Once enrolled in these programs, students often require a high degree of involvement with support services, including counselling, and referral to community social service agencies.

Many of the school exit programs are located in separate facilities, including sites away from the regular school

grounds; some of these facilities may be housed in social service agencies.

**(5) Other specialized programs.** There is a variety of additional programs which are aimed at students with attendance problems, including those students who are in imminent danger of dropping out, and for students who have dropped out and who may be attracted back to some form of additional education and training.

In the United States, for many students who do not plan to return to the regular school system to graduate with a secondary school diploma, there are classes which prepare them for the high school equivalency certification. This is known as the General Equivalency Development diploma program.

One approach to improving the attendance of potential dropouts is the peer support program. Students who are successful at the secondary school level are selected and trained to counsel and support high risk students in Grade 9.

As mentioned previously, many students develop attendance problems during the change from elementary school to secondary school. Some secondary schools have attempted to ease the transition by "clustering" all Grade 9 students for their core subjects, thereby limiting the number of teachers with whom they are involved. This enables teachers and students to get to know each other better, makes teachers be perceived as more accessible to students, and gives teachers the opportunity to spot attendance problems more easily and earlier in the first

secondary school year. The students still are able to take elective courses in the mainstream school classes.

In some schools, teachers volunteer to be a special friend or pal to students who need a special support in the school. The teacher befriends the student and organizes special times for individual attention. The teacher also is available for crisis intervention.

**Specialized personnel**

Among school systems, there is variation in the kinds of personnel who have responsibility for monitoring attendance, detecting attendance problems, identifying causes of absenteeism, co-ordinating efforts to reduce truancy, and finding ways of returning dropped out students to the system. In some jurisdictions the principal or vice-principal may assume that role, while in others the responsibility is assigned to specialized personnel. The latter may have backgrounds in various professional disciplines. In some jurisdictions these personnel are called pupil personnel workers, in others they are called attendance counsellors or truancy counsellors, and in still others it is the social workers or visiting teachers who take on the job.

Specialized personnel may operate out of a centralized special services department or unit in the school system, or each worker may be a staff member in an individual school. In the case of the centralized unit, staff may be assigned to cases or problems as they are received on referral from individual schools in the system, or staff members each may have a catchment of one

or more schools. The pattern of deployment of specialized staff varies with the size of school districts, numbers of students in individual schools, financial resources, space, education law, and education philosophy and policy.

There is variation, also, in the preparation for the assumption of attendance duties. In some places, no formal training is required. In other places, individual school districts may set their own standards for attendance workers. Some provincial or state Ministries/Departments of Education either encourage certain levels of training or specify, by policy or by law, what the training should be. Texas, for example, requires a two year Master's degree for visiting teachers, and Ontario prefers (but does not formally require) that attendance counsellors take a three-part Ministry of Education attendance counsellor certification course (consisting of approximately 300 hours of classroom instruction).

**Public relations methods**

Many school systems have made use of public relations methods to promote awareness of, and create public support for, school enrolment and regular school attendance, and to focus attention on the school systems' special programs and other efforts to hold on to students.

The use of the mass media has been the most effective means of reaching the public. Various advertising strategies have been used, including public service announcements and articles in newspapers and magazines, and television and radio

announcements. Also useful have been posters in stores and shopping malls, circulars, and newsletters. Famous entertainment and sports figures have lent their support to keeping students in school or getting them back for additional education if they have dropped out.

**School-community co-ordination.** Many school programs which have been developed to address student absenteeism depend upon the co-operation, support and active participation of social service agencies in the community. The major participants include probation services, child welfare agencies, the police, the courts, medical facilities, and other clinical services. The degree of involvement and co-ordination varies in different educational jurisdictions. In some locales, school personnel initiate referrals to appropriate agencies where students and parents receive assistance; in other locations, school personnel work more closely with the agencies. This type of contact usually occurs in regular planning meetings, outreach centres, joint committees, and teams.

Generally, where student absenteeism is concerned, ongoing contact with community social service agencies is the responsibility of pupil personnel workers who are employed by the local school boards or districts. These workers are aware of the various services that the agencies perform and the referral process which is involved. School boards or districts also have procedures and policies that must be followed when referrals and sharing of information is involved.

Many community members are actively involved in promoting regular school attendance. Local businesspersons willingly display posters that encourage school attendance or advertise local school programs. In addition, many merchants and community service organizations make contributions to school attendance incentive programs.

On a more organized basis, community members have been invited to serve on school committees and task forces. Their responsibilities may include (1) assessing the problem of school absenteeism and drop-outs in the community, (2) reviewing school attendance procedures, (3) helping to develop a uniform school attendance policy, (4) identifying potential school drop-outs, (5) recommending certain strategies to improve school attendance. To ensure that all viewpoints are represented, community membership may include church groups, civic groups, unions, local businessmen, educators, parents, and students.

Representatives of business and industry have demonstrated an interest in education not only by positively rewarding academic achievement, but also by providing students with practical work experience. In some cases, business and industry even have subsidized the education system by supplying equipment and facilities.

The highest level of community initiative in education involves the setting up of community development corporations which provide a full range of education and training programs.

## Follow-up of Individual Attendance Problems

Assessment of an individual attendance problem usually begins in the school, when the classroom teacher becomes aware that a student is not attending. The teacher usually confers with the student and/or parents to determine the cause of the problem and to devise a resolution. If the outcome is not satisfactory, the case is referred to the school administration. Parents and student are asked to meet with an administrator for further investigation.

In some schools there is a special team or committee which meets on a regular basis to assess the needs of students who are experiencing school difficulties. Cases of school absenteeism which cannot be resolved by the teachers and administrators may be referred to this team for additional assessment, leading to recommendations which may include the application of intervention methods or programs. Members of this team may include the principal, a pupil personnel worker, student services personnel, guidance and counselling staff, special education staff, and the school nurse.

Conferences of students and parents with local school personnel may be sufficient to resolve the attendance problem. Conferences really are part of the assessment process, but, in themselves, they may function as one level of the intervention process.

When a student is absent for a short time, there is an expectation that course work that was missed will be completed. However, if the absence is considered to be unexcused, the

intervention usually is more disciplinary in nature, and the student may be required to serve after school detentions or attend Saturday school to make up for the time missed. In some schools, students are not allowed to take part in extracurricular activities while the time is being made up. Other disciplinary measures include loss of credits and reduced marks; if the absences continue, many schools place students on suspension.

There is a trend to the use of behaviour modification techniques to intervene in student absenteeism. Attendance contracts with built-in consequences are one example. In addition to providing disciplinary measures for non-attendance, some schools offer incentives or rewards for improved attendance.

Lack of academic progress sometimes is a reason for non-attendance. Many teachers try to remediate this problem by tutoring the student during class or after school. Alterations in a student's learning environment may serve as interventions. For some children, it is enough to change the mode of instruction, while for others it is necessary to change to another classroom.

Responding to individual, personal needs sometimes may strengthen students' ties to the school or may have more direct effects on attendance. For example, many students who have working parents go home to an empty house; for them, the provision of extracurricular activities, such as after school sports and clubs, can lead to improved daytime attendance, as well. Other students who may be economicaly deprived may need clothing, suitable transportation, or part-time jobs. Medical

problems constitute another set of personal needs that, when taken care of, would resolve the problem of absenteeism in some instances.

If, after these kinds of attempts, the absenteeism continues, a referral may be made to more specialized school board staff. These could be pupil personnel workers, visiting teachers, or social workers, depending on the educational jurisdiction. The case is assessed yet again at this level. The assessment process can include home visits, conferences with the parents and the student, a psychoeducational evaluation, and consultation with other specialized school personnel. At this stage, a pupil personnel worker or social worker usually is in charge of case management and is responsible for co-ordinating all assessment procedures and for arranging any intervention activities.

The range of interventions at this level of the follow-up process includes methods and programs which are school-based, but which also involve programs which provide services to the school system as a whole. These programs include special education, tutorial and remedial programs, and alternative education programs.

When assessment and intervention at this level do not lead to success, the pupil personnel worker or social worker may make a referral which involves outside community social service agencies. In some locations the assessment is completed by the outside resource, while in other locations there is a joint effort among the educational agencies and the community agencies

to assess the situation and to formulate a plan for returning the student to school. Interventions applied may include individual and family counselling, vocational counselling, clinical assessments, youth assessment, and medical treatment. Although the pupil personnel worker retains case management responsibilities, the interventions are usually under the control of the outside resources.

The final level for assessment and resolution of attendance problems in many educational systems is involvement of the judicial authorities. In the juvenile justice system, the methods and procedures may include judicial hearings and reviews, removal from the home, detention, involvement of probation services, and parental fines.

During our visits around North America, we heard arguments both for and against the use of the courts as an intervention in truancy. At one extreme, the use of the juvenile court to enforce school attendance or to punish non-attendance was attacked as a useless, irrelevant, and/or harmful way of dealing with problems of the child, the family, and the school. Others considered only certain aspects of the law as potentially injurious to children, such as provisions to consign truants to juvenile facilities where they might be steered or shaped by delinquents toward antisocial and criminal careers. At the other end of the spectrum was a judge who told us that it could be seen as being unfair if, in a dispute between two parties (child/family on the one hand and school on the other) one of the parties in the dispute were to have the authority and the power

to decide which side is right. The majority of the persons with whom we visited were of the opinion that the courts were not the best place to seek solutions to attendance problems, but that, in some instances, and where all other efforts had been unsuccessful, the final authority of the court is needed.

## VI. CURRENT RESEARCH IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

This section must, of necessity, be brief. From the published literature and from the list of doctoral dissertations (see Volume I of this project), it is apparent that there is some research which has been conducted (and research which is in progress) on attendance and attendance problems. From our survey of the current situation, however, it also is apparent that very little is being done in conjunction with, or as a part of, the school and community programs with which we had contact. Some of what is termed research is the collection of statistics on school attendance and the mapping of trends. There is very little effort, and few resources, devoted to program evaluation, and the little that is done usually lacks for controls or for breadth.

It did not seem to the writers that the lack of program evaluation was due to a lack of motivation or a fear of the results on the part of school personnel who are attempting to deal with absenteeism. It did appear that most of these personnel (1) were not equipped to design and manage a research program, (2) were overloaded with day-to-day requests for their attendance management services and had no time to devote to research, even when the request was made that they take a more organized look at the effects of their work, and (3) were not usually provided with the resources to acquire outside research help. Almost all of our sources said that they needed and would welcome a research component in their school system or department. (One official, at the provincial level, was envious of the

fact that the Ontario Ministry of Education would fund this survey, and, as was true of most persons we visited, is eager to see our results.) Many spoke of plans to institute a research project which would evaluate a current or proposed program, but, when pressed for details, the plans would be found to be vague and the sources of support not yet clarified. Texas seems to be making some moves toward program evaluation, and there probably are some other places where there is similar activity, but, overall, North America is paying more attention to how to address attendance problems than it is to determining in a vigorous and rigorous way whether it is addressing the problems effectively.

## VII. DISCUSSION

The survey speaks for itself in describing the imagination, planning, energy, and concern which has gone into the development of programs of intervention for attendance problems and drop-out. In the course of our survey we also came across some pedestrian efforts, some confusion, frustration, and, fortunately only occasionally, an underlying expression of almost hostility and an attitude of punitiveness toward adolescent truants. There was, too, a diversity of opinion about the role that the courts should play in returning truants to school, ranging from the assertion that judicial coerciveness is damaging (one lawyer even invoked the United Nations charter of human rights) to the opinion that, for some truants, only court action could produce attendance and consequent educational enrichment. We heard, also, from the official responsible for dealing with attendance for a large, urban school board, that the public schools in his city have no attendance problem (the comments from other educational personnel of the same school district concerning that official's pronouncement were, to put it politely, unkind).

Many provincial and state Ministries and Departments of Education gave us little or no information about research or intervention in their jurisdictions, and many did not seem to be as aware of what was going on as one might expect. One member of a large board of education in the U.S. said that the large city boards of education are so powerful that state education departments are unwilling to try to interfere in any way, and the

state department influence is more likely to be exercised (and accepted) in the smaller and less influential rural school districts; when this viewpoint was repeated in visits to other places, there was general agreement with it.

In the United States, it appears that the major interest now lies in school drop-outs and in drop-out programs, the latter including programs to prevent students from dropping out, programs to try to keep students in school at least part-time, and programs to lure current drop-outs back into educational programs. Truancy and attendance remain of interest because (1) truancy is considered to a predictor of drop-out, and (2) funding is based in part on attendance.

In the following discussion, we will address only a few, selected issues.

## Is There an Ideal Attendance Program?

There are some issues, characteristics, and procedures of attendance programs about which there appeared to us to be consensus (if not hard data or complete agreement). A program needs to have -

- an atmosphere of caring about what happens to students.
- the involvement and motivation of teachers and school administrators, as well as of students, plus the co-ordinated involvement of the home, the various community components, and all levels of government.
- flexibility in the handling of students and of student problems.

- the home informed when a student is absent.
- a quick response to attendance problems.
- early identification of high-risk children.
- some local (school level) autonomy in setting up programs and approaches appropriate to the community from which the school draws its students.
- more common (across school systems) definitions.
- better reporting procedures.
- more staff to deal with truancy, drop-out, and program evaluation.
- more and better program evaluation.
- some court involvement, as a last resort, to back up attendance laws.

There also is a good measure of agreement that

- truancy is a "symptom" or a sign of something gone wrong.
- there is a complexity of contributions to attendance problems.
- there is a need for another look at what are the goals of education and what are the best educational programs to achieve these goals.

It does not seem to us that there is one ideal program which fits all communities. The circumstances, resources, and problems of different geographical areas, of different sources and amounts of funding, of different laws, of differences in local custom, of different school district sizes, of differences

in prevailing socio-economic status, of different population densities, even of different climates - all of these and more mean that each community must plan attendance truancy, and drop-out programs in terms of what makes educational sense in that place.

A good example in point is the Student Attendance Review Boards (SARBs) in California (described in Appendix G). In Alameda County (San Leadro Unified School District), where the school district continued a SARB program even after the State of California ceased funding it, we found a great amount of praise and enthusiasm for the work of the program and a feeling that the effect of the SARB's work has been to reduce truancy (although, here, as elsewhere, controlled studies were not done). In Los Angeles, on the other hand, we were told that the SARB had been a disaster, and that the program had been dropped when it was no longer mandated by the state. It does not take much imagination to raise the possibility that the difference in size between the San Leandro Unified School District and the huge Los Angeles Unified School District may have had some bearing on how the SARBs worked out in the two places.

## Definitions

The terms used in the various programs we surveyed included "absence," "absenteeism," "truant," "truancy," "chronic truant," "persistent truant". The words mean different things in different areas:

- in some places, some of the terms are used interchangeably, whereas in others those same terms may each have a distinct and separate connotation;
- in some places the term "truancy" may refer to almost any absence, whereas in other places it may refer to absence without the knowledge of the parent, and in still other places it may be defined as absences which remain unexplained after several other causes of absence have been excluded;
- the number of days truant before a child is considered to be "a truant" may vary from only one such absence to several absences;
- the criteria for truancy may be set in terms of numbers of absences (e.g., three absences), number of consecutive absences (e.g., absence on three consecutive days), number of absences within a designated time period (e.g., three absences within one week), number of absences within a number of time periods (e.g., two absences per week for three weeks).

In one school system we visited, the term truancy is applied to absence from class which occurs on a day on which the student appears on the school grounds, whereas not appearing at school altogether (when there is no adequate reason for it) is referred to as "unexcused absence".

Students who are called "drop-outs" in one educational system may be called "truants" in another system. A drop-out in

one system may be a student who does not appear in school for a certain number of days; in another system, a drop-out may be a student who does not appear in school for a certain number of days and about whom there has been no query from another school; in yet another system a drop-out may be a student who must meet several criteria for the designation "drop-out". (We heard from one satisfied school district superintendent that there was no truancy or drop-out problem in his school board, the reason being, as he explained it, that students with such problems usually left that school board and were taken up by another school board; his problems simply disappeared from his jurisdiction to surface as someone else's problems elsewhere.)

Another term which gets used quite variably is "program". We found that "program" was used to describe such diverse approaches to absenteeism as the simple operation of an automatic telephone dialing system (to call parents when their children are absent from school), and a complex, school-community integrated, assessment-intervention arrangement in which an automatic dialing system might be one of the methods used.

This lack of standardized definitions produces difficulties in comparing rates of truancy and drop-out in different places, in comparing research results from studies done in different places, and in assessing the effectiveness of different systems interventions.

## Attendance Problems Among Native Canadian Peoples

Special attendance problems arise among Canada's Native peoples when students of high school age must leave the reserves

and board in cities to attend high schools there. There appears to be some ambivalence among the chiefs and other Native leaders, who see a need for quality education for Native children, but who are unhappy that it takes place in an environment in which the students, away from Native cultural and family influences, may acquire undesirable attitudes and behaviours. The students may sense this ambivalence, and that may make it easier for them to lengthen their visits home to the point that they miss school and are in danger of dropping out. The boarded-out adolescents miss their homes, and some of those who counsel these students are of the opinion that the students need to be provided with more opportunities and funds to visit with their families.

## Attendance Problems Outside North America

If it is any consolation, attendance problems do not reside only in North America. England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, Japan, and India, are some of the places which contribute to the literature on absenteeism and drop-out. (Materials we received from some European countries indicated attendance problems there, as well, but such languages as Swedish and Dutch tested our personal resources and found us wanting.) Brief discussions with two visitors from the Soviet Union, a psychologist and a special educator, revealed that there, too, there are attendance problems and the need for more specialized personnel to help deal with them.

## Early Identification

If, at an early stage, one can predict the later occurrence of attendance problems, one can intervene in an attempt to reduce the likelihood that the problems will occur or to reduce the severity of the problems if they do appear. Some school systems are pursuing such a course: in Dade County (Florida), for example, children as young as first graders may be identified, according to certain criteria, as being at risk; they are placed into "clubs" which meet outside of the regular school classes and in which various procedures are used to try to increase learning and decrease the problem behaviours which are considered to cause or contribute to later absenteeism and drop-out.

This kind of early identification and the singling out of "high risk" students for special attention, raise some questions.

(1) One question has to do with "labelling". Will identifying students as being at risk for attendance problems have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy such that these students, by way of the self-image that the label may engender and by way of the attitudes and reactions of other students and teachers who know that a label has been applied, will be led and shaped toward the very absenteeism that the early identification had been intended to avert? Dade County school board personnel are of the opinion that the criterion behaviours (such as excessive fighting, poor reading ability, failing school grades) which enter into early identification already identify these students to

classmates, teachers, and parents, as being problem children, so that the fact that the school takes official note and intervenes does not add any stigma to what already exists.

(2) Another, related question concerns the percentage of children identified as being at risk for attendance problems who actually do develop those problems. If every child predicted to become an absentee does, indeed, absent himself or herself from school, then attempts to intervene in all cases may be justified (leaving aside, for the moment, the matter of the effectiveness of intervention). If prediction is less than perfect, this means that a number of children who will not later have attendance problems will, nevertheless, be subjected to intervention procedures intended to reduce the likelihood of the non-occurring event. If, as in Dade County, early current behaviour problems are both the predictors of later attendance problems and the focus of early identification, then the intervention attempts would appear to pose no special difficulties in that they appropriately address current concerns. If not, then considerations which must enter into the decisions of whether to identify and whether to intervene may include the accuracy of prediction, the percentage of children in the general school population which actually will have attendance problems, the intrusiveness of the interventions, any

potential harm resulting from the interventions, the costs per child of the interventions, and the estimated eventual costs of not intervening (for example, the costs of later special services and the costs to society of drop-outs).

(3) The matter of the effectiveness of intervention methods is the focus of a number of the papers abstracted in Volume I of this project (see Preface).

## Attendance Counsellors

The responsibility for dealing with absenteeism rests with different school personnel in different places. In some places, either because of a move away from the concept of the "truant officer" or because of limited staff, the investigation of causes for absenteeism, and the subsequent management of the situation, are handled by persons who have other responsibilities as well (in a variety of administrative, teaching, and special services areas). In other places, the job of controlling attendance may be the full-time, or nearly full-time, responsibility of social workers or school counsellors or visiting teachers. In still other places, a person with the title of "attendance counsellor" or some similar designation holds this responsibility.

Whoever it may be, it is clear that -

(1) the diversity of factors which cause and maintain school absence requires that the responsible person have available a variety of investigation, interviewing, and other assessment skills;

(2) the diversity of methods and programs for intervention require that the responsible person have a solid grounding in what motivates young people of different sex, age, background, and ability;

(3) the usefulness of community involvement requires that the responsible person know what the social agencies, businesses, unions, industries, social organizations, and other community groups have to offer, and how to tap these community resources;

(4) the potential value of the responsible person to the teachers, as a source of information and advice, can be realized fully only if that person knows and is known by the teaching staff and the rest of the education personnel well enough that he or she is not perceived as something alien to the system.

Because attendance and absenteeism are not events occurring in isolation from other aspects of the individual, family, school, and community, the persons who are charged with creating and maintaining an attendance program for an education system, and with planning and implementing an individualized attendance management plan for an absentee, must themselves have the education, training, and supervised practice which amount to a professional specialty course of study.

# VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Policy Statement

A strong attendance policy statement, which defines problems, limits, and goals, should be prepared. The policy statement should be accompanied by an integrated set of program resources and procedures which focus on attendance.

## 2. Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is a necessary component of a successful school attendance program. All policies, expectations, and procedures should be communicated to the parent.

## 3. Public Relations

Community support and involvement in ongoing school activities is an important aspect of encouraging student attendance. Community interest should be encouraged through membership on school committees, distribution of newsletters, Home and School (Parent-Teacher) Associations, and displays in local centres.

## 4. Accurate Record Keeping

The need for accurate records is essential. Without them, it is impossible to operate a successful program, and very difficult to do program evaluation.

### 5. Consistency in Enforcement

All participants who are involved in maintaining satisfactory school attendance should adopt a consistent approach. To encourage and help achieve this consistency, all procedures and consequences should be written into a procedural manual.

### 6. Prompt Follow-up

Prompt attention (via phone, letter, visit, etc.) should occur in response to absenteeism.

### 7. Identification and Intervention

It is important to identify attendance problems as early as possible and to intervene as quickly as possible. This requires that there be clear criteria for early identification and clear guidelines for follow-up.

### 8. Continuum of Follow-up

Initial attempts to deal with absenteeism should occur at the local school level. However, if the problem becomes more chronic or severe, it is important that the case be referred to more specialized personnel. This, again, calls for the establishment of criteria and guidelines.

### 9. Specialized Personnel

It is crucial that individual specialized personnel be identified clearly, and that their roles in resolving attendance problems be defined.

### 10. Suitable Educational Programs

Programs which meet the individual educational needs of students are important interventions. These programs include alternative curricula and alternative schools, special education, work experience, vocational training, guidance and counselling, and tutorial and remedial programs. Early identification and special programs at the elementary school level should be established.

### 11. Staff Development and Training Programs

All those who are responsible for encouraging and enforcing attendance should be involved in pre-service and in-service training programs.

### 12. Interagency Co-operation

Many attendance problems demand assessment and intervention by agencies outside the school system. It is important that both systems develop a co-operative approach to the problems.

### 13. Retaining Focus in the School

School personnel who have the responsibility for case management must retain this responsibility through the entire course of follow-up. Case management may involve the co-ordination of educational and community resources, but good management and effective intervention require that the focus and control of an educational problem be retained by the educational system.

## 14. Recognition for Attendance

There should be some attempt to provide incentives or rewards for attendance, in addition to providing consequences for non-attendance.

## 15. Evaluation

The evaluation of interventions should be required. Efforts at both the individual and system-wide levels should be assessed.

## 16. Specialized Personnel

Educational systems should employ specially trained personnel to deal with the needs of high risk students in both an educational and community context.

## 17. Alternatives to Suspension

Students who are suspended often are potential drop-outs, and the suspension can help to lead the student away from the school system and further education. Alternatives to suspension may have more holding power for many students with attendance problems, and these alternatives should be available as part of a planned program for increasing attendance and avoiding drop-out.

## 18. Sources of Funding

The complexity of causes of attendance problems, and the need for solutions which involve input from various parts of the extra-educational community, have led some school systems to look

for program funding from outside the traditional financial sources. This has been particularly so in the United States, where business and industry have contributed money and equipment as well as personnel and consultation, and where the provision of funds by the federal government, along with federal guidelines for the use of the funds, has led to the development of intervention programs which the states, by themselves, either might not have set up or else might not have established until a much later time. In Canada, of course, the history and tradition of federal-provincial relationships are much different than they are in the U.S. It may be worthwhile to investigate various funding patterns as to their feasibility and desirability within the Canadian context, keeping in mind the principle that the educational system should be at the core of educational ventures and should set the limits of external involvement in the educational process.

### 19. School Board Control and Co-ordination of Services

Consistency in the development, application, and evaluation of attendance programs, and the maintenance of a focus on education, require that the school board co-ordinate the efforts of personnel across the many schools, external agencies, and levels of government, in co-operative attempts to promote attendance and manage attendance problems.

## APPENDICES

Appendix A. Model Programs

Appendix B. Example of an Attendance Plan

Appendix C. Job Descriptions of Specialized Personnel

Appendix D. Alternative Programs

Appendix E. Staff Development Programs

Appendix F. School-Community Programs

Appendix G. School-Community Social Service Agencies Co-ordination

Appendix H. Flow Charts for Absence Procedures

Appendix I. Persons Met with, Phoned, or Otherwise Contacted in the Course of the Survey

# APPENDIX A. MODEL PROGRAMS

## State of Maryland

In the belief that school absenteeism is a complex social issue, the Maryland State Department of Education (including the Department of Pupil Personnel), the Social Service Administration, and the Juvenile Services Administration, joined together to create the Maryland Interagency Committee on School Attendance (MICOSA) in 1980. The purpose of this committee was to make recommendations regarding possible actions to combat chronic student absenteeism.

Many of the committee's recommendations were accepted and are reflected in activities at both the state and local levels. One example is the establishment of local interagency committees (based on the state model) which consult with pupil personnel workers regarding individual cases of student absenteeism. Included in these committees are representatives from education, mental health, juvenile services, and social services.

The committee at the state level also has implemented public relations campaigns to provide information and gain community support in dealing with the problem of school absenteeism.

Although there is no state-wide attendance plan to act as a guideline for enforcing compulsory school age attendance, local educational jurisdictions have developed their own plans. These guidelines provide record-keeping procedures, define lawful and unlawful absences, and outline procedures and interventions to be followed by local schools when dealing with student absences.

Local schools are expected to try to resolve cases of individual student absenteeism through use of school-based interventions. If the absences continue, the case is referred to the pupil personnel department for follow-up by an individual pupil personnel worker. If all attempts at this level do not result in improvement in attendance, the pupil personnel worker will consult with the local interagency committee. That committee makes recommendations for further intervention at the community level. It is only after all resources at this level have been exhausted that the pupil personnel worker will refer the case to the court system.

At each level of the follow-up process, there is a wide range of interventions that the person in charge of the case may use to encourage school attendance. These interventions range from local school resources to those involving more complex community intervention.

Many educational jurisdictions in Maryland have a number of alternative education programs available as intervention resources. (See Appendix D.) These programs are for students who are defined as disruptive youth (students whose absences and/or other behaviour interfere with their ability to learn in a regular school environment).

In addition to these state funded programs, the Maryland State Department of Education sponsors several training programs for school staff. The topics addressed include instructional leadership, establishing an effective school climate, and implementing programs for disruptive youth.

## Chicago Public Schools (Chicago, Illinois)

The Chicago Public Schools system implemented the Truancy Alternative Program - On Needs Early (TAP-ONE) in an effort to improve student attendance. This program, funded by the Illinois State Board of Education, is based on the assumption that chronic truancy is a symptom and not the problem. Solving the problem requires: (1) understanding the problem, using a diagnostic-prescriptive approach; (2) providing outreach services to chronic truants; (3) making available someone to advocate for chronic truants; (4) using "activist counselling" rather than traditional counselling.

The overall goal of TAP-ONE is to provide truancy prevention and intervention services to students who have high rates of absenteeism. Development of this program over the last several years has involved input from representatives from schools, community agencies, business and industry, the courts, parents, the police, and students.

Overall responsibility for this program rests with the Department of Pupil Services of the school board. This department is made up of several bureaus, including the Bureau of School Attendance and the Bureau of Dropout Prevention Programs. It is the Bureau of School Attendance which co-ordinates the TAP-ONE program.

The TAP-ONE project is a continuum of services, described below, provided by specifically assigned school board staff to respond to the needs of truants at three levels: the local school level, the district level, and the city-wide level.

**The Local School Level**

At this level, resolving problems of school attendance is the responsibility of teachers, school administrators, and truant officers. Many activities have been designed to create a learning environment in which students' needs can be identified and resources can be provided to address these needs. The TAP-ONE staff provides assistance to local schools and truant officers in obtaining an accurate count of the number of truants and drop-outs in the system. It also provides in-service training on establishing local truancy prevention and intervention programs.

**The District Level**

Attendance Improvement Managers (TAP-ONE staff) are assigned to certain elementary schools to provide case management for those cases of chronic truancy which could not be resolved at the local school and local community level. It is the responsibility of the Attendance Improvement Manager (AIM) to assess the case using diagnostic-prescriptive approach and to initiate appropriate intervention strategies. These interventions involve resources both within the school board and in the community.

There also are TAP-ONE city-wide co-ordinators who assist the AIM in identifying resources which can be used in the intervention process. If the problem is found to be too complex, the case will be referred to one of the other bureaus within the Department of Pupil Personnel Services, where psychologists and social workers work in a team approach.

**City-Wide Level**

A School Attendance Review Board has been set up to deal with cases of chronic truancy that could not be resolved at the first two levels. This committee, with representatives from both the school and the community, determines whether all school and community resources have been identified and implemented as interventions.

If there is no resolution to the attendance problem at this point, the case will be referred to the court system.

The Bureau of Dropout Prevention Programs is involved in working primarily with high schools to (1) keep students in school until graduation, and (2) retrieve former students and place them into some type of remedial program. This bureau has developed innovative alternative education programs, many with a work experience or vocational training component, to serve the needs of these students. Some of these programs have received partial funding from the U.S. federal government under the U.S. Job Training Partnership Act.

## APPENDIX B. ATTENDANCE PLAN: STUDENT AND INSTRUCTION POLICIES OF THE NETTLETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (JONESBORO, ARKANSAS)

### Policy

Regular attendance is necessary if students are to be successful in school. Irregular attendance not only makes learning more difficult for the student, but also promotes a bad habit which is likely to cause trouble for him/her when he/she enters the work force. Although attempts shall be made through the development of rules and in other ways to encourage students to attend school whenever possible, the ultimate responsibility is that of the parents.

### Procedures

**Attendance of Students in Grades 1-8**

1. A student returning to school after an absence shall bring a written note from home explaining the absence. This note shall be presented to the child's teachers when her/his classes meet during the day. Teachers shall determine whether make-up work is required.

2. If absences become frequent, the principal shall contact the parent to discuss the situation and to encourage better attendance. If the reason for absence does not seem valid and the child continues to miss school, the principal shall refer the child to the county attendance officer.

3. Truancy is defined as being absent from school without the consent of parents and/or without the permission of the principal. If a child is absent and is believed to be truant, the principal shall contact the child's parents and/or the county attendance officer. When the child returns to school, the principal shall take any other disciplinary action that he/she deems necessary.

**Attendance of Students in Grades 9-12**

1. Student absences shall be neither excused nor unexcused.

2. Students participating in school-sponsored activities shall not be counted absent.

3. Students who are absent more than ten (10) times in any class during a semester cannot receive credit in that particular class. The limits for nine-week courses shall be one-half the regular limits.

A. An extension may be granted, if the student provides proof of personal illness for five (5) of the first ten (10) days of absence.

B. No extension may be granted to any student who has been truant or suspended.

C. Any absence after an extension must be for a personal illness or a death in the immediate family. Proof must be furnished in the form of a statement by a physician or a minister.

D. Extensions beyond twenty (20) days must be approved by the school board.

4. Teachers are to contact parents after the fifth absence in class.

5. Teachers are to notify the assistant principal when students have missed eight (8) days in a class. The assistant principal shall then inform the parents.

6. After a student has exceeded the limit in any class, the teacher shall inform the assistant principal, and he/she shall drop the student from the class and inform the parents.

7. The principal shall assign incoming students a limit on their absences on a prorated basis.

8. Three tardies to class shall equal one absence. Tardies later than ten (10) minutes shall be counted as absences. Three (3) tardies to homeroom or study hall shall count as an absence in all classes.

9. Students who deliberately miss school or classes shall be charged as "truant" and shall be counted absent for a full day in addition to the classes actually missed. Excessive absences (over ten) in study hall or homeroom shall be counted as truancies.

10. Student absences shall not be used to penalize the student's grade.

11. Teachers shall not be required to give make-up tests; but may do so if the grade is needed for adequate evaluation of the student's progress.

12. Students must be enrolled in at least three (3) classes for which they may receive credit.

13. Any student who has been absent three (3) or fewer days in all classes and who has not been truant or suspended shall be exempted from semester examinations.

**Minimum Period of Attendance Required**

The minimum period of attendance of children that is required shall be 150 school days, as nearly consecutive as possible, in each school year.

**Attendance Accounting**

A record of student attendance shall be kept by the school in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Department of Education of Arkansas.

**Checking Out, Checking In**

No student shall be excused to leave the school before the end of the school day without a request by the parent and the permission of the school principal or his/her designated representative. The student shall follow any other rules of the school he/she is attending concerning procedures for checking out and checking in.

**Released Time for Student**

A senior may be allowed to enrol for a short schedule providing he/she meets the following requirements. (A short schedule is defined as a class schedule for a student which has

fewer than seven (7) class periods assigned to a student in a seven-period school day.)

1. The student's schedule allows her/him to meet graduation requirements.

2. The student is enrolled for at least three (3) full-credit classes.

3. The student has employment. The principal shall have on file a statement from the employer indicating the type of work, hours employed, and other pertinent information prior to the fall registration of the student.

4. The student must leave the school grounds promptly upon completion of her/his school day and must not return to school while classes are in session, except to take care of business in the office.

## APPENDIX C. JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL

### Visiting Teacher - State of Delaware

Title 14, Delaware Code, presently provides for one visiting teacher to be hired within each school district for each full 250 state units of pupils. The State Board of Education has defined the visiting teacher as being a combined attendance worker and social worker. In the area of attendance the visiting teacher's primary responsibilities should be to:

1. Ensure regular attendance of all school-age children.
2. Assist in the identification of pupils who are unable to participate in the regular school program because of mental, physical, or emotional handicaps.
3. Assist teachers in early identification of pupils with patterns of irregular attendance or non-attendance.
4. Assist in the development of a program to promote positive pupil and parent attitudes toward school attendance.
5. Enforce the attendance laws and the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.
6. Assist the school in determining the correct age of particular pupils entering and leaving school.
7. Assist the chief school officer in referring cases of truancy to the appropriate agency.
8. Consult with parents and students on ways in which they can co-operate more effectively with the school in matters of pupil attendance.

9. Keep the school informed on progress being made on individual attendance cases.

10. Interpret to the school conditions within a particular home which affect attendance.

11. Work with migrant families to ensure attendance of school-age children.

In the area of social work, the primary duties of the visiting teacher, when they apply, are to:

1. Establish liaison between the school and agencies concerned with child welfare (i.e., Magistrate's Court, Division of Social Services, Diagnostic Centers, etc.).

2. Assist the school and the home in referring pupils to the appropriate agency for aid which is not available through the public school system.

3. Co-operate with the school in establishing professional services with individual pupils in order to bring about the correction of any personal, social, or emotional maladjustments.

4. Co-operate with the school in establishing understanding of professional services by the parents through their participation and use of appropriate resources on behalf of their children.

5. Assist school personnel in gathering information and determining the role they perform in working with pupils, parents, and agencies in an attempt to aid the pupil who is in need of modifying his/her behaviour.

6. Assist the school in the investigation of cases of suspected neglect/abuse of pupils and referring these cases to the appropriate agency.

7. Assist the school in the investigation of pupils who may need economic assistance.

8. Assist the school in identifying resources available for providing emergency aid to pupils who are in need of clothing, medical attention, etc.

9. Interpret to the school the pupil's home conditions which are affecting the ability to learn and conform to the behavioural standards established by the school.

10. Assist the school in the development of teacher in-service programs leading toward a better understanding of the pupils and the community which the school serves.

11. Assist the school in establishing parent discussion groups and identifying community resources available to the school district.

**Dropout Prevention Counsellor -**
**Los Angeles Unified School District**

This school system has established the role of Dropout Prevention Counsellor in an effort to keep students in school until graduation. Attached to high schools with particularly pressing student attendance problems, their responsibilities include: (1) developing and supervising drop-out prevention information centres; (2) identifying students who may be potential drop-outs; (3) providing ongoing counselling to students; (4) providing school staff with in-service training and consultation on positive classroom management; (5) implementing a school-community drop-out prevention program.

These counsellors work on a team with a Pupil Services and Attendance Counsellor and a psychologist to provide comprehensive, ongoing services.

## APPENDIX D. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

### Detroit Attendance Intervention Centers

### Detroit Public Schools (Detroit, Michigan)

Target group: high school students who violate the truancy provision of the Detroit Public Schools Uniform Code of Student Conduct.

Students are referred to the Detroit Attendance Intervention Centers by high school principals. They are enrolled in three classes: language arts, mathematics, and group guidance. Classes focus on the individual needs of students in group settings of fifteen.

Counselling is used to help students acquire specific self-awareness skills and effective problem-solving techniques.

### Disruptive Youth Programs

### Pupil Personnel Services, Maryland State Department of Education

Pupil Personnel Services distributes funds by way of a grant system to local educational systems to set up alternative programs. These programs, using existing resources within the school system, are for disruptive students or potentially disruptive students.

All the programs are classified according to the level of service which is provided. Level A programs, called Long Term Direct Intervention, are either independent schools or classrooms within a school; they are for students who are experiencing great

difficulty in adjusting to the regular school. Some of the components of Level A programs include individualized instruction, career education (including work experience in the community), long term counselling by either a counsellor or a school psychologist, and special tutoring.

The Level B Short Term Direct Intervention Programs are for time periods varying from one class period to three days. The strategies include the use of (1) time out rooms, (2) in-school suspension programs, and (3) counselling programs. The components include short-term counselling, long-term counselling follow-up, and academic assistance/tutoring.

**Truancy Programs of the Alternative Schools Network**

**Chicago, Illinois**

The Alternative Schools Network is a non-profit coalition of community-based elementary and secondary schools. Nine of the network schools have truancy alternative programs. The general school curriculum is quite flexible and there is a range of social services provided including counselling, legal and emergency assistance, and vocational training.

**Youth Opportunities Unlimited**

**London, Ontario**

This program is for young people, ages 16 to 24, who have little or no education. The purpose of the program is to help young people develop job skills and gain work experience.

Funding for this program is provided by the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development (Futures), and a teacher is provided by the London Board of Education.

**School for Alternative Studies**

**Board of Education for the City of Scarborough (Ontario)**

Recently, this board of education has opened a school which houses several programs for students who either are potential drop-outs or are drop-outs who are returning to school.

One program (Supervised Alternative Leaving Experiences) is for students who will enter the work world. The program focuses on life skills training and work experience. Another program is for 15 and 16 year old students who wish to re-enter the regular school system. Components of the program include counselling and basic skills remediation.

**School-Commuity Guidance Centers**

**Department of Professional Support, Texas Education Agency**

These centres have been developed to provide services designed to ameliorate the impact of factors contributing to truancy and drop-out. Basic academic skills are emphasized through individual instruction and tutoring. A counselling component focuses on social skills development, job awareness, and problem-solving skills. Follow-up services are provided to schools when students return to the regular school system.

Other services include liaison and co-ordination of services with other community agencies. There are several

categories of programs which include in-school suspension centres, alternative schools, juvenile detention facilities, and services integration centres.

## Summary

The examples included in this section are only a small representation of those programs which have been developed across Canada and the United States. The focus of the program in each area depends on the needs of the students there and the resources which are available.

## APPENDIX E. STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

### Positive Alternatives to Student Suspension (Project PASS) Pupil Services Demonstration Project, Euclid Student Services (St. Petersburg, Florida)

Major activities of the PASS program include individual and group consultation that assist schools in developing techniques for (1) dealing effectively with teenage students, (2) affective education, and personal development programs for students and teachers, (3) time out rooms managed by a teacher or paraprofessional, where students talk out problems and complete academic assignments, (4) individual and group counselling for students experiencing difficult interpersonal confrontations, and (6) counselling for parents.

### Intercept: A Positive Alternative to Pupil Suspensions, Truancy, and the Dropout Ossining Public Schools (New York)

Project Intercept provides pre-service and in-service training for teachers to address the behaviour of students in Grades 9 to 12 who have high rates of truancy, failure, and disruptiveness. Four major topic areas are covered in training: (1) effective discipline procedures, (2) classroom management techniques, (3) instructional skills, and (4) group counselling, including parent training skills. Management skills for establishing alternative academic programs for potential drop-outs also are taught.

**"Staying In - A Dropout Prevention Handbook. K-12"**

**J. Novak and P. Dougherty (Eds.)**

**Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

While not a training program as such, this handbook covers topics that are a part of staff training programs. The handbook addresses concerns such as needs assessments and evaluation, staffing, resources and facilities, community support and parent involvement. It also includes materials for staff in-service activities, adaptable for drop-out intervention at the local school level.

## APPENDIX F. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### Adopt a School Program

The Adopt a School Program, in which local schools are adopted by community organizations (including businesses, industries, unions, and service clubs), is an example of how community involvement can further the quality of education and of links with the labour market. Described as a partnership between a school and an organization, the program has been very successful in the United States, and recently has been initiated in the province of Ontario. Each program is developed to serve the needs of the school, and some of the activities include tours of company facilities, co-operative education, tutoring by company employees, career education days, and provision of needed equipment to the school.

### Coca Cola Valued Youth Project

### San Antonio, Texas

One unique approach to community involvement in schools is the Coca Cola "Valued Youth Partnership" drop-out prevention program, which is designed to demonstrate an effective and efficient method for reaching those youngsters in low income areas who were at high risk of leaving school. Money is given to several places in the United States to finance various methods.

The Intercultural Development Research Association in San Antonio, Texas, used its grant money to fund tutoring programs in collaboration with both the Edgewood Independent

School District and the South San Antonio School District. Fifty potential Hispanic secondary school drop-outs were hired as tutors for one hundred and fifty elementary school students who were experiencing academic difficulties. Tutors work approximately eight hours a week during school hours and they are paid minimum wage. Tutors also receive instruction in educational tutoring from teachers. Secondary school credits are granted for the work.

## Community Development Corporations

There is a high degree of community involvement in some programs which have been developed to serve the needs of students who previously have dropped out and usually are unemployed due to a lack of skills and work experience. One model is the Community Development Corporation, whose main purpose is to develop the economy of the community by undertaking commercial activities. Workers on the projects receive basic education, academic upgrading, and entry-level job skills development.

An example of a program which is developed on this model is the Learnxs Foundation, Inc., established by the Board of Education for the City of Toronto. This has become a model for several other programs in the Ontario cities of York, North York, and Ottawa. These are non-profit organizations, and funding comes from several levels of government, corporations, individual donations, and community organizations. Teachers from the local school boards provide the educational component in these programs.

**Oakland County (Michigan) Attendance/Dropout Task Force**

The Oakland County Attendance Dropout Task Force is composed of one hundred and fifteen persons from education, community agencies, parents, graduate students, juvenile courts, law enforcement agencies, colleges, universities, and the religious community. The task force assists each of the twenty-eight school districts in Oakland County to develop its own strategies for reducing student absenteeism and drop-out.

## APPENDIX G. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES CO-ORDINATION

### Student Attendance Review Boards

Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB) are used to co-ordinate the resource-services of the community, the educational, and the juvenile justice systems. These local boards originally were mandated and funded by the State of California. Although no longer so mandated and funded, many of the local educational jurisdictions in California considered them valuable enough that they continued the operation of SARBs under their own funding, and the California SARBs have been the model for similar review boards established in other areas.

The SARBs, with representation from each of the systems noted above, meet on a regular basis to consider referrals from local schools. Recommendations from the committee are discussed thoroughly with parents and students, and are incorporated into a contract which they are encouraged to sign. Recommendations may include regular school attendance, individual and/or group counselling, peer counselling, tutoring, changes in educational program, and referral to other social agencies. If these recommendations do not resolve the problem, or if the recommendations are not followed, the school district is directed to inform either the child welfare authorities, probation services, or the district attorney. The court may require that the SARB substantiate that everything else has been tried before the judge will consider the case.

## Adjustment Services Department, The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton (Ontario)

This approach is similar to that of California's Student Attendance Review Boards. A committee which includes representation from education and local community service agencies acts as a resource in cases in which individual school absenteeism has not been resolved by the school or the adjustment counsellor.

## Truancy Centres

Some large urban school boards or districts have initiated the concept of truancy or attendance centres. These centres are located on off-campus sites in the city. Generally, each centre is staffed by pupil personnel workers. When a student of compulsory school age is found on the street by police during school hours and is found to have no legitimate excuse for not being in school, he or she is transported directly to one of the centres. The staff at the centre interview the student and then contact the parent(s) and the home school. The student then is returned to the home school or is picked up by the parent. Follow-up may include counselling, and referral to social service agencies.

Some examples of truancy centres are: (1) Truancy Centre Program, New Orleans Public Schools, New Orleans, Louisiana; (2) Truancy Prevention Program, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia; (3) Truancy Patrol Team, New York Board of Education,

Brooklyn, New York; (4) Operation Stay in School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

**Student Attendance Centers, Division of Student Services, D.C. Public Schools (Washington, D.C.)**

Based in part on the Truancy Centre concept, these centres, located in the community, provide a network of direct and supportive services to parents and students with attendance problems. The centres are staffed by social workers, attendance counsellors, secretarial staff, and a driver to take students back to their home schools. Referrals can come from schools, community social service agencies, parents, the students, or the police (when a student is apprehended away from school during school hours). The services provided, on both a short term and extended basis, include individual and group counselling, truancy prevention programs, drop-out prevention activities, and career assessment referrals.

**Cities in Schools (Washington, D.C.)**

This is a U.S. national, private, non-profit organization which co-ordinates existing human and social services for students on school sites. It tests, evaluates, and assesses the various needs of students through a variety of school and program services, including counselling, life planning workshops, and pre-employment training. Goals of the program include (1) increase in the average daily attendance of students, (2)

provision to students of co-ordinated units of social services, and (3) increase in life skills.

**Family Court Clinic Classrooms Program**

**Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, Toronto (Ontario)**

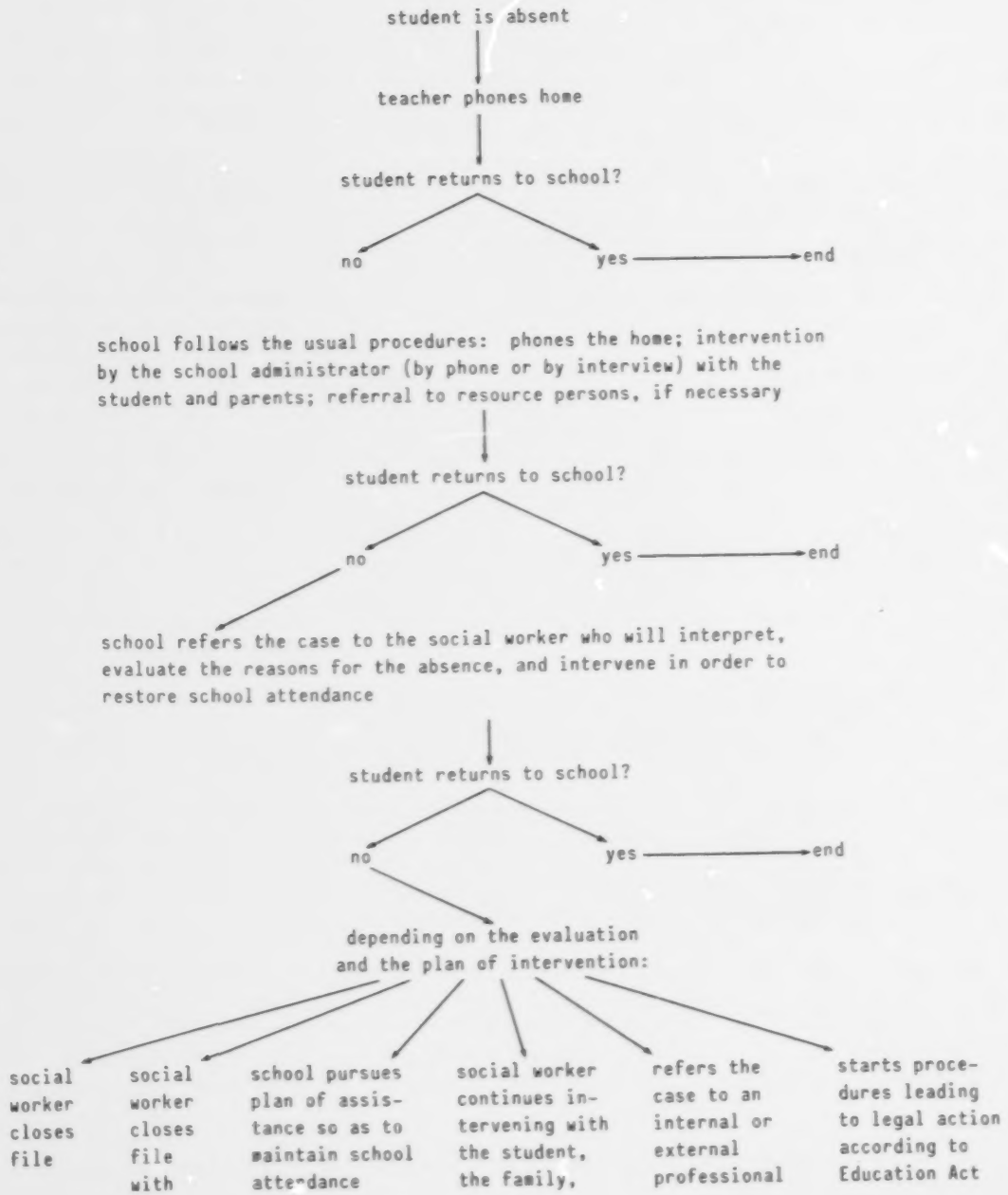
This program includes two classrooms, one of them located in an outpatient, family court clinic, and the second one, a transition classroom, located in a regular high school. The program was established for students whose needs could not be met within any type of educational program without some ongoing and closely co-ordinated involvement of clinical personnel. Most of those students have significant attendance problems. Referrals to the clinic classroom come from the clinical staff when a clinical assessment suggests that the classroom services are needed. The classroom teachers do their own assessment, and, if they consider the referral to be appropriate, will accept the student providing that the clinician agrees to be available for consultation as needed. As part of the general program, there is a clinic staff member who serves as liaison between the clinic and the classroom (the classroom is a part of, and is staffed and supervised by, the Toronto Board of Education), a co-ordinating and advisory committee which is made up of the teachers, the liaison person, and selected clinical staff members, and a weekly group meeting of the students with two clinicians. The aim of this program is to prepare the student to return to the regular school system. As the student progresses in the clinic classroom and comes closer to transfer back to the regular school, he or

she may be assigned to the transition classroom which, by virtue of its location in a regular school setting, eases the move back to the normal educational environment. There is close co-ordination and exchange of information among the classroom teachers in the two settings, and the clinic continues the provision of clinical services.

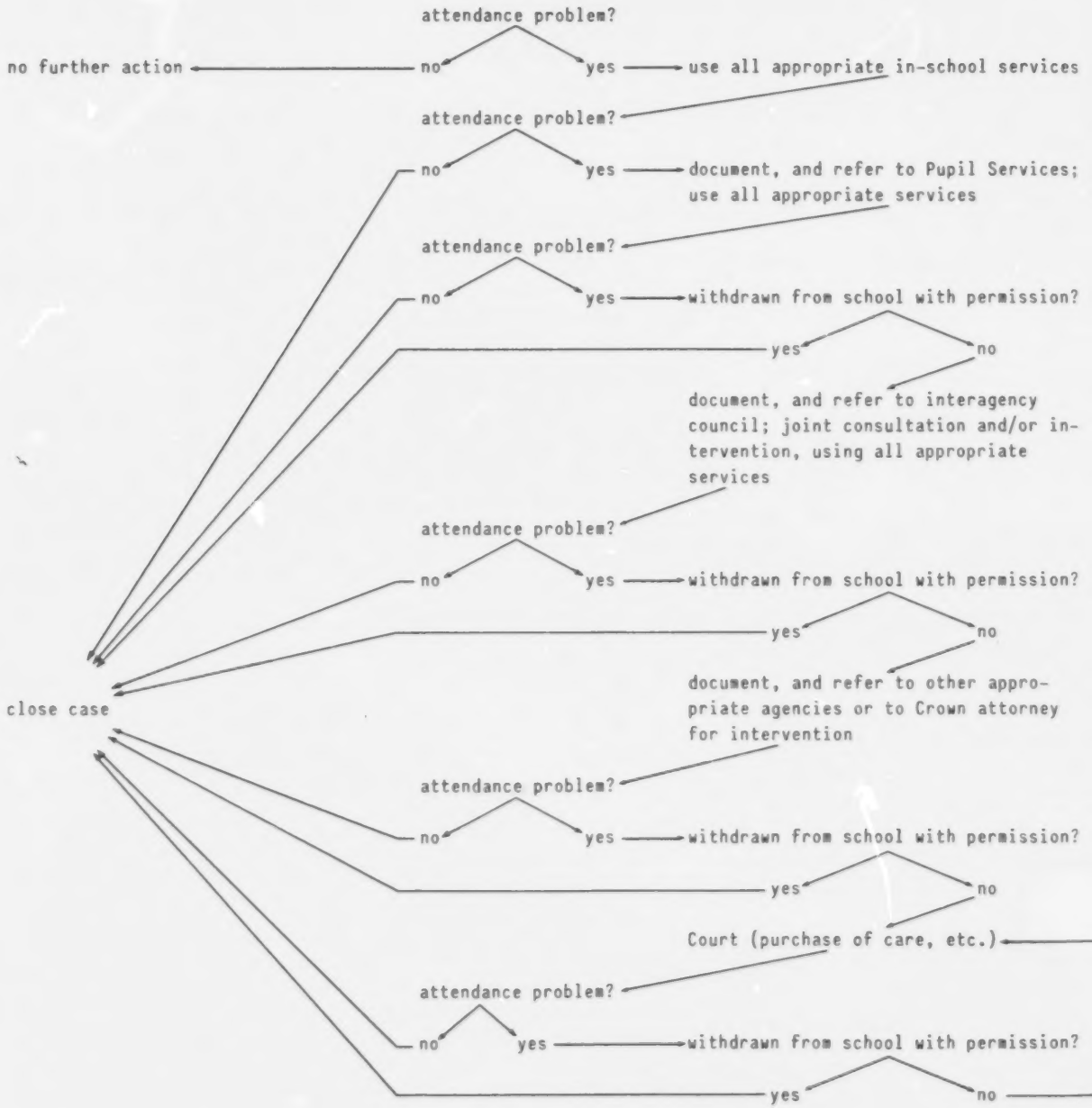
The educational component is a regular school program in terms of the subjects offered, but there is a remedial focus because many of the students have large gaps in their basic skills (language, mathematics, reading). There is a work experience component for those students who wish to have it, using local businesses, with close liaison between teachers and employers. The work experience earns the student regular high school credits under the Guidance Curriculum Guidelines (Guidance Co-operation Education) of the Ministry of Education of Ontario.

## APPENDIX H. FLOWCHARTS FOR ABSENCE PROCEDURES

### FLOWCHART DERIVED FROM PROCEDURE FOR ABSENCES AT THE PROTESTANT SCHOOL BOARD OF GREATER MONTREAL (PROVINCE OF QUEBEC)


student is absent
teacher phones home
student returns to school?
no
yes
end
school follows the usual procedures: phones the home; intervention by the school administrator (by phone or by interview) with the student and parents; referral to resource persons, if necessary
student returns to school?
no
yes
end
school refers the case to the social worker who will interpret, evaluate the reasons for the absence, and intervene in order to restore school attendance
student returns to school?
no
yes
end
depending on the evaluation and the plan of intervention:
social worker closes file
social worker closes file with
school pursues plan of assistance so as to maintain school attendance
social worker continues intervening with the student, the family,
refers the case to an internal or external professional
starts procedures leading to legal action according to Education Act

## FLOWCHART DERIVED FROM THE MARYLAND MODEL



## APPENDIX I. PERSONS MET WITH, PHONED, OR OTHERWISE CONTACTED IN THE COURSE OF PROGRAMS SURVEY

Albert Aguayo - Assistant Superintendent, Department of Secondary Education, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado.

Robert Algozzine - Special Education, College of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

Gayle H. Anderson - Manager, Education Development Center, Minnesota State Department of Education, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Josephine D. Arasteh - Administrator, Human Learning and Behavior Branch, Center for Research for Mothers and Children, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Washington, D.C.

George Ayers - President, Chicago State University, Chicago, Illinois.

Ibrahim Badawi - Resident in Ambulatory Care, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, Ottawa, Ontario

Susan Bailey - Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.

Robert C. Barnum - Commissioner, Youth Services, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Topeka, Kansas.

Hilde Beckie - Home Visiting Teacher, Regina Catholic Schools, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Milton Bennett - Coordinator, Attendance, Safety, and Driver Education, Office of Educational Program Development, West Virginia State Department of Education, Charleston, West Virginia.

Ian Berg - Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Leeds Western Health Authority, Leeds, United Kingdom.

Benjamin J. Bernoudy - Director, Uniform Code of Student Conduct, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan.

Heather Blackwell - Social Worker, The Board of Education of the Regina School Division, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Joel Bloom - Assistant Commissioner, Division of General Academic Education, New Jersey State Department of Education, Trenton, New Jersey.

Donald B. Bolton - Administrator, Student Attendance and Adjustment Services, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Wesley O. Boyd - Coordinator, School Social Work/Education Alternatives, Georgia State Department of Education, Atlanta, Georgia.

Carol Brock - Inservice Institute Coordinator, Vermont State Department of Education, Montpelier, Vermont.

Frank B. Brouillet - State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia, Washington.

Joseph G. Brown - Director, Student Attendance Service Center, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Lawrence Brown - President, 7001 Ltd., Washington, D.C.

Robert F. Brown - Counsellor, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Thunder Bay, Ontario

Deborah Callahan - Specialist, Senior High Schools Options, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Sheila Cameron - Social Worker, London Family Court Clinic, London, Ontario

Sandi Caro - Visiting Teacher, South San Antonio Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas.

Paul Carrier - Social Worker, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Anne Carron - Psychologist, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Center for Urban Affairs, Chicago, Illinois.

Chicago United, Chicago, Illinois.

Larry Chomin - School Psychologist, Henry Lyster School, Detroit, Michigan.

Cynthia Coates-Hill - Social Worker, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Rosalie Cole - Dropout Project, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado.

Armand Colosimo - Attendance Counsellor, The Lakehead District Catholic School Board, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

G. Scott Conrod - Director of Student Services, The Protestant School Board, Montreal, Quebec.

Robert B. Cormier - Chief, Corrections Research, Research Division, Programs Branch, Solicitor General Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

Cathy Cox - Department of Research, Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas.

Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.

Del Crabtree - Program Coordinator, Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Hugh J. Curtis - Area Service Director, Child Guidance Clinic of Greater Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Jim Davies - Director of Bureau Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

David Davis, Jr. - Coordinator, Educational Development Services, Alameda County Office of Education, Hayward, California.

Department of Counseling and Psychological Services, Georgia State College of Education, Atlanta, Georgia.

Department of Psychology, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Ralph D. Dickens - Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia.

Terence R. B. Donahoe - Minister of Education, Province of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Hank Dorsey - Director of Attendance Service, Child Welfare Office, Berkeley, California.

Barbara Dougherty - The Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.

Irina Dubrovina - Deputy Director, Institute of General and Paedogogical Psychology, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Dane Edley - Social Worker, Student Attendance Service Center, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Roger Edwards - Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Marcella G. Egenes - State Attendance Officer, Division of Human Services, Indiana State Department of Education, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Sheldon Ehrlich - Public Relations, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Faculty of Education, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Rilda van Feggelen - Dartmouth District School Board, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

Gerry Fewster - Principal, Special Education Services, Scarborough Board of Education, Scarborough, Ontario.

Sara L. Foulks - Director, Department of School Social Work, New Orleans Public Schools, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Queen D. Fowler - Executive Director, Pupil Personnel Services, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Maryellen Francoeur - Psychologist, Children's Regional Centre of Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Sylvia Garcia - Education Program Director, Texas Education Agency, Austin Texas.

Lloyd Garmezy - Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Paul E. Gendreau - Psychologist, Rideau Regional Centre, Burritt's Rapids, Ontario.

Thomas A. Giordano - Director of Attendance Services, Buffalo Board of Education, Buffalo, New York.

Tom Grayson - Educational Specialist, Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, Illinois.

Rick Grey - Social Worker, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Jean Griffin - Educational Reporter, Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois.

Larry Haberlin - Supervisor of Child Care Workers' Services, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Hugh J. Haley - Psychologist, Law School, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Anna Hallrup - Swedish National Board of Education, Stockholm, Sweden.

John Harris - Carver High School, Chicago, Illinois.

Nora Harwell - Assistant Administrator, Henry Lyster School, Detroit, Michigan.

W. Murray Hayes - Regional Coordinator of Special Education, Saskatchewan Education, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Maureen Hemphill - Minister of Education, Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Cathy Cox - Department of Research, Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas.

Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.

Del Crabtree - Program Coordinator, Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Hugh J. Curtis - Area Service Director, Child Guidance Clinic of Greater Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Jim Davies - Director of Bureau Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

David Davis, Jr. - Coordinator, Educational Development Services, Alameda County Office of Education, Hayward, California.

Department of Counseling and Psychological Services, Georgia State College of Education, Atlanta, Georgia.

Department of Psychology, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Ralph D. Dickens - Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia.

Terence R. B. Donahoe - Minister of Education, Province of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Hank Dorsey - Director of Attendance Service, Child Welfare Office, Berkeley, California.

Barbara Dougherty - The Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.

Irina Dubrovina - Deputy Director, Institute of General and Paedogogical Psychology, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Dane Edley - Social Worker, Student Attendance Service Center, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Roger Edwards - Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Marcella G. Egenes - State Attendance Officer, Division of Human Services, Indiana State Department of Education, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Sheldon Ehrlich - Public Relations, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Faculty of Education, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Rilda van Feggelen - Dartmouth District School Board, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

Gerry Fewster - Principal, Special Education Services, Scarborough Board of Education, Scarborough, Ontario.

Sara L. Foulks - Director, Department of School Social Work, New Orleans Public Schools, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Queen D. Fowler - Executive Director, Pupil Personnel Services, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Maryellen Francoeur - Psychologist, Children's Regional Centre of Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Sylvia Garcia - Education Program Director, Texas Education Agency, Austin Texas.

Lloyd Garmezy - Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Paul E. Gendreau - Psychologist, Rideau Regional Centre, Burritt's Rapids, Ontario.

Thomas A. Giordano - Director of Attendance Services, Buffalo Board of Education, Buffalo, New York.

Tom Grayson - Educational Specialist, Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, Illinois.

Rick Grey - Social Worker, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Jean Griffin - Educational Reporter, Chicago Tribune, Chicago, Illinois.

Larry Haberlin - Supervisor of Child Care Workers' Services, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Hugh J. Haley - Psychologist, Law School, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Anna Hallrup - Swedish National Board of Education, Stockholm, Sweden.

John Harris - Carver High School, Chicago, Illinois.

Nora Harwell - Assistant Administrator, Henry Lyster School, Detroit, Michigan.

W. Murray Hayes - Regional Coordinator of Special Education, Saskatchewan Education, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Maureen Hemphill - Minister of Education, Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Ronald Henbest - School Social Worker, Bureau Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Irene Hill - Project Facilitator, Pilot Attendance Project, Department of Education, Baltimore, Maryland.

Larry Hnetka - Communications Coordinator, Educational Research Institute of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.

John Honan - Judge, Buffalo, New York.

David W. Hornbeck - State Superintendent of Schools, Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore, Maryland.

Ken Horsman - Executive Director, Curriculum Development, Saskatchewan Education, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Dennis Huculak - School Social Worker, Bureau Services, Sector D, Malmo School, Edmonton, Alberta.

Dan M. Isaacs - Assistant Superintendent, Special Projects and Reconfiguration Office, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Peter Jaffe - Director, London Family Court Clinic, London, Ontario.

Gayle Gilchrist James - Edmonton, Alberta.

Olga James-Reid - University of West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

Kenn Johnson - Ontario Ministry of Education, Toronto, Ontario.

Geoff Jopson - Coordinator of Student Support Services and Counselling, Education Services Group, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Jerome Kagan - Professor, Department of Psychology and Social Relations, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Cal Kakegumick - Student Counsellor, Boarding Student Program, The Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Barbara Kardas - Dean, College of Education, Chicago State University, Chicago, Illinois.

Ken Keiser - Divisional Assistant, Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Don Kinley - School Psychologist, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Fred Koch - President, Jobs for Tennessee Graduates, Memphis, Tennessee.

Ralph H. Kolstoe - Professor, Department of Psychology, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Pat Kuhi - Chairperson, Alameda County School Attendance Review Board (S.A.R.B.), San Leandro, California.

Charles L. Kyle, Jr. - Chicago, Illinois.

Judith Langdon - Tutorial Outreach, Adult Day School Board of Education for the City of York, Toronto, Ontario

Annmare Law - Coordinator, Center for Dropout Prevention, School of Education, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

Mickey Law - Teacher, Lakehead District Roman Separate Catholic School Board, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

David R. Leasure - Pupil Personnel Worker, Office of Pupil Personnel, Baltimore County Public Schools, Baltimore, Maryland.

Sylvia LeBlanc - Psychologist, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Alan D. W. Leschied - Assistant Director, London Family Court Clinic, London, Ontario.

Roger Lefrançois - HLA Consultants, Edmonton, Alberta.

Allan H. Lehmann - Coordinator, Bureau of Dropout Prevention Programs, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois.

James D. Lehmann - Executive Deputy Superintendent, Houston Independent School District, Houston, Texas.

Min Leong - Staff Specialist, Pupil Services, Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore, Maryland.

Wilma Lewis - School Social Worker, Henry Lyster School, Detroit, Michigan.

Jack D. Little - Director of Education and Secretary, The Board of Education for the City of London, London, Ontario.

Peter Little - Student Placement Office, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Vladimir Lyubovsky - Special Educator, Institute of Defectology, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Lee Lundberg - Supervisor, Attendance and Support Services, San Leandro Unified School District, San Leandro, California.

Mervin D. Lynch - Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

John Martinez - Program Coordinator, Southside Truancy Outreach Program, San Antonio, Texas.

Pete Martinez - Dropout Prevention Coordinator, Dropout Task Force, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Richard E. Maurer - Principal, Anne M. Dorner Middle School, Ossining, New York.

Greg McClare - Child Social Worker, Toronto Board of Education, Toronto, Ontario.

Gordon McClure - Principal, M. R. McHugh School, Ottawa Board of Education, Ottawa, Ontario.

Dale McCollough - Training and Employment Development Division, Texas Department of Community Affairs, Austin, Texas.

Alice McDonald - Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Sheila McDonald - Teacher, Ottawa Board of Education, Ottawa, Ontario.

Robert L. McElrath - Commissioner, Tennessee State Department of Education, Nashville, Tennessee.

Floretta D. McKenzie - Superintendent of Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Florence McKie - Curriculum-Special Needs Programs, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

David McLean - Psychologist, Family Court Clinic, Ottawa, Ontario.

Al McLeod - Assistant Superintendent of Student and Community Services, Scarborough Board of Education, Scarborough, Ontario.

Jim McNeirney - Consultant, Public Information Services, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado.

Knud Michelsen - Deputy Head, International Relations Division, Ministry of Education, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Ruth Michelson - School Social Worker, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction Générale des Régions, Quebec City, Quebec.

Joell Mohan - School Social Worker, Bureau Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Oliver C. Moles - Acting Head, Division of Education and Society, Office for Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D.C.

Don Moore - Designs for Change, Chicago, Illinois.

Dan Morris - College of Education, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida.

Joe Morrison - Superintendent of Operations, Halifax County School System, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

T. S. Nisbet - Attendance Counsellor, Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Jan Novak - The Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.

Marth O'Kelley - Attendance Officer, Kelly Miller Junior High School, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Laurie Olsen - The Citizens Policy Center, Inc., Oakland, California.

Don Olweus - Institute of Personality Psychology, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.

Nancy L. Peck - Director, Center for Dropout Prevention, School of Education, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

Tony Piotta - Teacher, St. Elizabeth School, Lakehead District Roman Catholic Separate School Board, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

John Pisapia - Assistant State Superintendent, Program and Instruction, The Board of Education of the Regina School Division, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Jerry Powers - Director, Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Gene Provenzo - Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

Leroy Pulliam - Principal, Alternative Program, Newark Unified School District, Newark, California.

Glenn Purcell - Chief Attendance Counsellor, Student and Community Services, Scarborough Board of Education, Scarborough, Ontario.

Herbert C. Quay - Chairman, Department of Psychology, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

J. Gilberto Quezada - Manager of Special Programs, South San Antonio Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas.

Cary Reichard - Professor, Special Education, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

Barbara Reid - Attendance Counsellor, Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Marge Reitsma-Street - Graduate Student, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

Rodney Riffel - Program Manager, Job Training, National Conference of State Legislatures, Washington, D.C.

Lee Robins - Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

John W. Rogers - Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, Ontario Ministry of Education, Toronto, Ontario.

Joseph Rosen - Former Executive Director, Illinois Task Force on Children Out of School, Chicago, Illinois.

Bernice L. Rosman - Director, Training, Research, and Evaluation, Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mel Rottenberg - Appalachian Regional Commission, Washington, D.C.

Bob Saigh - Information Director, Office of Communication, Chicago Board of Education, Chicago, Illinois.

Perry Sailor - Evaluation Associate, Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas.

John Samborsky - Consultant, Attendance and Counselling, Student and Special Services, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke, Etobicoke, Ontario.

Thomas Sanabria - Coordinator, Network for Youth Services, Chicago, Illinois.

George Sanders - Department of Education, Appalachian Regional Staff, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Washington, D.C.

Doris H. Sanders - Director, School Attendance, Work Permits, Census, District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

Peggy Sange - Technical Assistant, Disruptive Youth Program, State Department of Education, Baltimore, Maryland.

Ed Scheibler - Education Counsellor, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Peter Schifferli - Court Liaison-Attendance Teacher, Buffalo Board of Education, Buffalo, New York.

Karen Shapiro - Graduate Student, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.

Arthur G. Shaw - Special Assistant to the Executive Vice-President, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

S. A. Sheffield - Director, Inspection Services, Nova Scotia Department of Education, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Ernest Shelton - Guidance Counselor, Henry Lyster School, Detroit, Michigan.

Joe Sherron - Supervisor, Career Education, Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida.

Kenneth D. Sjoen - School Safety, Law Enforcement Specialist, National School Safety Center, Sacramento, California.

Robert Smilanich - Associate Superintendent, Consulting Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

James R. Smith - Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum and Instructional Leadership, California State Department of Education, Sacramento, California.

Sandra Smith - Director, Legislative Services, Alberta Education, Edmonton, Alberta.

Joan Solomon - Director of Urban Education, Missouri State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Velma Speight - Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Compensatory, Urban, and Supplementary Programs, Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore, Maryland.

Rita Spivey - Appalachian Regional Commission, Washington, D.C.

Julie Starsiak - Aide to Illinois State Representative Al Roman (member of the Illinois State Legislative Task Force), Chicago, Illinois.

Steven J. Stein - Research Psychologist, Thistletown Regional Centre, Toronto, Ontario.

Gayle Stewart - School Social Worker, Bureau Services, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.

Michael Stott - Child Mental Health Clinic, Department of Youth Services, County of Erie, Buffalo, New York.

Student Services, Atlanta Board of Education, Atlanta, Georgia.

Keith Sullivan - Professor, Education Department, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Josephine Thomas - Acting Coordinator in Secondary Education, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado.

Terry Thomas - Director, Department of Pupil Personnel Services, Oakland Schools, Pontiac, Michigan.

Hershel Thornburg - Editor, Journal of Early Adolescence, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

Robert Tobias - Administrator of Evaluation, Office of Educational Assessment, New York City Public Schools, Brooklyn, New York.

Mavis Tremblay - Social Worker, The Board of Education of the Regina School Division, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Linda Trenton - Management Information Co-ordinator, Department of Education, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

Michael Tripp - Attendance Counselor, Eastern High School, Washington, D.C.

Carol Urquhart - Pine Mountain Settlement School, Bledsoe, Kentucky.

Jan Valentine - Social Worker, Student Attendance Service Center, D.C. Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

M. C. A. van Gign-deJong - Ministry of Education, The Netherlands.

Anna Venable - Counselor Liaison, Detroit Attendance Intervention Centers, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan.

Mary P. Vereen - Supervisor, Dropout Prevention Program, Student Services, Dade County Public Schools, Miami, Florida.

Adolf J. Volk - Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Regina Catholic Schools, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Thelma Vriend - Program Coordinator, Detroit Attendance Intervention Centers, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan.

Samuel A. Wallace - Coordinator, Health/Social Services, Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, Georgia.

Norman Walsh - Associate Superintendent, Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

Dave Westerback - Psychometrist, Children's Regional Centre of Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Rod A. Wickstrom - Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Education, Regina, Saskatchewan.

Charlie G. Williams - State Superintendent of Education, South Carolina State Department of Education, Columbia, South Carolina.

Wayne Willis - Social Worker, London Family Court Clinic, London, Ontario.

Linda Wilson - Coordinator, Student Attendance and Adjustment Services, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.

Kym Wolfe - Director, Youth Opportunities Unlimited, London, Ontario.

Sandy Wood - Administrative Assistant, Division of Evaluation and Research, St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri.

M. C. George Yang - Coordinator, Attendance and Welfare, New Haven Unified School District, Union City, California.

Joseph M. Yurkiw - Supervisor, Adjustment Services Department, Board of Education for the City of Hamilton, Hamilton, Ontario.

Harvey Zingle - Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Barbara Zvonar - Teacher, Ottawa Board of Education, Ottawa, Ontario.